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RECORD COPY

HFAC

OLL 84-3281/1
10 September 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Request for Congressional POW/MIA Briefing

1. This afternoon I called Catherine Shaw, Staff Member of the HFAC Task Force on MIAs in Indochina, to explain the Agency's role in this whole issue. I told Ms. Shaw that DIA had long ago assumed responsibility for the POW/MIA problem and that the Agency played a support role. I told Ms. Shaw that all reporting the Agency received on this subject was immediately turned over to DIA and, from time to time, we were asked by DIA to furnish specific support.

2. I told Ms. Shaw that DIA had a division staff focused on this problem and was in a much better position to respond in detail to Congressman Gilman's requests. Ms. Shaw said she understood our position and that she would communicate this to Congressman Gilman. She said prior to the August recess, Mr. Gilman expressed some concern, in the wake of critical newspaper articles, that he might not be consulting with all agencies involved in collecting intelligence on the possible existence of live American servicemen in Southeast Asia. According to Ms. Shaw, it was Mr. Gilman's idea to have her get in touch with the Agency to see if we had anything which would be of use to him in his capacity as Chairman of the Task Force.

3. Before calling Catherine Shaw, I talked with [redacted] Office of Congressional Relations at DIA to tell him how I planned to answer this request. [redacted] concurred in this approach, and I explained to Ms. Shaw that I had coordinated this response with DIA.

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Chief, Liaison Division/OLL

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LD/OLL [redacted] (11 Sept. 84)

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29 AUG 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Liaison Division
Office of Legislative Liaison

VIA : [REDACTED] 25X1
Evaluation and Plans Staff

FROM : [REDACTED] 25X1
Chief, East Asia Division

SUBJECT : Congressional POW/MIA Briefing

1. The attached memorandum recommends that a briefing be given Representative Gilman on recent newspaper articles alleging a coverup by the US Government regarding knowledge of the existence of live servicemen in Southeast Asia. [REDACTED] 25X1

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[REDACTED] we have not given briefings or testimony on the POW issue. Rep. Gilman conducts periodic POW/MIA hearings in which DIA testifies. The questions are quite detailed and the committee apparently keeps track of certain "front burner" cases. We are not staffed in the division to monitor individual cases as is DIA which has expanded their POW/MIA organization to a division. We do, however, provide all field reports (intelligence dissems, memos and sterilized operational reporting) on POW/MIA matters to DIA. We also are in daily contact with DIA on this subject and coordinate assistance [REDACTED] 25X1

2. I do not believe it would be productive or desirable to brief Congress on the POW/MIA issue for the following reasons:

a. The question of a US Government coverup is patently without merit.

b. DIA is the customer for all POW/MIA reports and is in a better position to respond to what action has been taken to resolve individual cases. DIA already responds to Rep. Gilman in periodic hearings.

c. DIA has been very helpful in assuming the central role as far as Congressional testimony is concerned.

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In the past where our own activities have been involved, DIA has graciously and consciously delivered a response which they coordinated with us beforehand.

d. DIA spends a great deal of time and manpower getting prepared for these periodic briefings. Our briefing on the POW/MIA issue might set a precedent that would see us included in the DIA briefings or having to prepare periodic briefings in the future.

3. I recommend Rep. Gilman's office be informed that we shall be pleased to provide a briefing on the subject but that DIA is in a better position to answer his queries re POW/MIA reporting. We could add that there is absolutely no reporting that would confirm the existence of US servicemen being held against their will in Southeast Asia despite persistent memos to the contrary. We should also communicate that we are devoting all appropriate resources to the resolution of the POW/MIA problem and treat all reports of live sightings as if they were true until they are proved otherwise.

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